

FOREWORD

"Heaven and earth never agreed better to frame a place for man's habitation," wrote John Smith of his explorations of Chesapeake Bay in 1608. When the first settlers bound for Maryland set sail in the *Ark* and *Dove* a quarter century later, Smith's vision for the bountiful land along the Bay was at last to come to fruition. Virginians had travelled and traded in the area, and one, William Claiborne, had established on Kent Island in 1631 the first permanent settlement in what was to become Maryland. But the passengers on the *Ark* and *Dove*, probably fewer than 150 in number, were the vanguard of a noble band that would carve the homesteads, found the cities and towns, and establish the families that gave Maryland its unique character.

Credit for the venture that resulted in the founding of Maryland is due principally to George Calvert and his son Cecil. George Calvert, first Lord Baltimore, was deeply committed to establishing a colony in the New World. Even an abortive attempt to settle in the hostile environment of Newfoundland did not deter him. Shortly after abandoning this first colony called Avalon, George asked the Crown for a grant of land farther south where the climate would be more favorable to settlers. Calvert's plea was granted, but the charter he so avidly sought was still incomplete when George died on April 15, 1632. The task of fulfilling his father's dream devolved on Cecil Calvert, second Lord Baltimore, who received the Charter of Maryland on June 20, 1632. Securing sufficient financial backers required more than a year. Thus it was not until November 22, 1633, that the *Ark* and *Dove* set sail from England for the Chesapeake. Braving tempests and the threat of pirates, the colonists landed on St. Clement's Island on March 25, 1634.

As we approach the 350th anniversary of the founding of Maryland, it is appropriate to reflect on the vision and considerable financial sacrifice of George and Cecil Calvert, and of the bravery and commitment of the men and women who first came to these shores. The Maryland Heritage Committee, under the chairmanship of the Honorable J. Dudley Digges, is coordinating efforts to make this anniversary of Maryland's founding informative and meaningful for all Marylanders. A new exhibition center and expanded interpretive programs and sites at St. Mary's City, under the direction of the St. Mary's City Commission, will enable everyone to achieve a better appreciation of the life and times in Maryland's first capital city. The historical research conducted by Dr. Lois Green Carr, historian of the St. Mary's City Commission, and those who have been associated with her over the years, has enabled the Commission to interpret the archaeological sites and area surrounding ancient St. Mary's City with a sensitivity and depth of knowledge previously unequalled. These efforts by State agencies will be augmented by various private groups and civic organizations throughout the State, which will sponsor programs to enhance the awareness of Maryland's past.

Maryland's 350th anniversary celebration will be especially significant because of the rich heritage preserved in the State archives. The Maryland Hall of Records began a half century ago as the focal point of the commemoration of the 300th anniversary of the founding of Maryland. Since it opened, the Hall of Records has achieved a reputation as an outstanding State archives. Its collection and preservation of the permanently valuable records of the colony and State has resulted in one of the finest, and most complete, series of such records available in the country. Filled to the bursting point, and with only cramped quarters available for both staff and researchers, a new Hall of Records is now being constructed to commemorate the 350th anniversary of Maryland. The new facility will ensure continued preservation of the State's priceless archival heritage, and provide improved access to the sources necessary for studying Maryland's past. An event such as the 350th anniversary of the State creates widespread interest in historical topics, and exposes many people for the first time to the bountiful documentary history that exists for Maryland. But the State's commitment to preserving this record heritage for future generations in a modern, efficient, and secure archives will prove a lasting monument for years to come.

Compiling a book such as this, as we are required by law to do biennially, provides a unique perspective on the growth and development of Maryland and its government. One of the prized possessions of the Hall of Records is a small leather-bound volume known as Liber Z. The book records the actions of Maryland government and its people for the years 1637 through 1650, and yet it numbers fewer than 200 pages. By the time of the American Revolution, the population of Maryland had grown enormously and the difficulties of fighting the war with Britain dictated an expansion of government. Still, the remarkably complete records of what occurred in the State during these turbulent war years, included among the Maryland State Papers series at the Hall of Records, reveal a government that was